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## Grand Canyon News Release

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### **Lightning Causes Multiple Fire Starts on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park**

**Grand Canyon, Ariz.** – Afternoon thunderstorms brought abundant lightning to Grand Canyon National Park this week; and fire managers have identified six new fires, all on the North Rim of the park.

#### **Aspen Fire**

The Aspen Fire was reported on July 29 and is located on the Walhalla Plateau east of the North Rim developed area. The fire is burning approximately one mile southwest of Vista Encantada on the Cape Royal Road in mixed vegetation, consisting of ponderosa pine with fir and Mexican locust, as well as dead and down logs from the 2001 Vista Fire. This fire has been very active over the last 36 hours, producing visible smoke and growing to approximately 60 acres. Smoke from this fire is visible from the North Rim developed area as well as the Cape Royal Road and has been settling into Bright Angel Canyon after sundown. Fire managers currently expect the Aspen Fire to burn for several weeks and intend to manage it for resource benefit.

#### **Angel Fire**

The Angel Fire was reported on July 29 and is located north-northwest of the North Rim developed area, approximately 2.5 miles west of Point Imperial. The fire is smoldering and creeping in dead and down logs from the 2000 Outlet Fire. The Angel Fire is approximately 0.1 acres in size; and fire managers intend to manage it for resource benefit.

#### **Butte Fire**

The Butte Fire was reported on July 29 and is located in the inner canyon east of the Walhalla Plateau and southwest of the Nankoweep area. It is burning in low, woody vegetation and is approximately five acres in size. This fire is burning in an extremely remote area, bounded by cliffs and bluffs. Fire managers intend to let the Butte Fire burn itself out.

### **Point Fire**

The Point Fire was reported on July 28 and is located approximately two miles north-northeast of Highway 67 and one mile south of the park boundary. This two acre fire was contained due to its close proximity to the Saddle Mountain Wilderness. The Point Fire will be in patrol status until it is declared out.

### **Poplar Fire**

The Poplar Fire was reported on July 29 and is located eight miles northwest of the North Rim developed area in Kanabownits Canyon. The fire is approximately 0.1 acres in size and is smoldering in dead and down logs from the 2003 Poplar Fire. Fire managers intend to manage the Poplar Fire for resource benefit.

### **Thompson Fire**

The Thompson Fire was reported on July 29 and is located within the Range Prescribed Burn Unit which is scheduled for treatment this fall. The fire is located approximately two miles north of the North Rim developed area and one mile west of Highway 67, and is burning in mixed conifer forest. This fire, which would be a first-entry burn, is being contained as hot, dry conditions combined with heavy fuel loads could lead to undesirable fire behaviors and effects.

The Angel, Aspen, and Poplar Fires are all being managed for resource benefits at this time. The benefits fire managers expect to achieve with these fires include maintaining fire in a fire-dependent ecosystem, reducing heavy fuel loads that increase the risk of large fires that exhibit undesirable fire behaviors and effects, recycling of nutrients and diversification of wildlife habitat.

Visitors to the North Rim should expect to see smoke from the Aspen fire from the Cape Royal Road and the North Rim developed area. Smoke from the fires may also be visible from South Rim viewpoints. In addition, smoke may sink into Bright Angel Canyon during the evening hours. Coordination with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality is ongoing.

There are no fire-related road or trail closures on the North Rim at this time.

Additional news releases about these fires will only be posted as significant changes in size, fire activity or management objectives occur.

For more on the fire management program at Grand Canyon National Park, please visit our web site at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/parkmgmt/firemanagement.htm>. For more on these fires, please contact Public Affairs Specialist Shannan Marcak at 928-638-7958.

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